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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 USOSCE 000184

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SUBJECT: OSCE WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS: JULY 27 - 31, 2009

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Hugh Neighbour for Reasons 1.4(B)&(D)

Below are highlights from the Daily Digest of the U.S.
Mission to the Organization of Security and Cooperation in
Europe. These and other articles can also be found on
Intelink at
[http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/Portal:Orga_nization_for_Se
curity_and_Cooperation_in_Europe](http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/Portal:Orga_nization_for_Se_curity_and_Cooperation_in_Europe)

Election Support Mission to Afghanistan Deployed

1. (U) A team of election experts from the OSCE/ODIHR
Mission arrived in Kabul July 26 to support conduct of the
August 20 presidential and provincial council elections in
Afghanistan. The 20 experts from the mission will assist
election stakeholders in Afghanistan, including election
administration bodies and domestic observer groups. The
experts will follow the campaign, pre-election preparation,
the media situation, election day proceedings, the count
and tabulation of results and the complaint and appeals
process. Short field visits will be made to the provinces,
security situation permitting. There will be no public
statement issued immediately after election day, but a
report with the experts' findings and recommendations for
improvement will be made several weeks later. (POL:
Raschka)

Kyrgyz Elections Hammered at OSCE

2. (SBU) In OSCE/ODIHR's July 27 Statement of Preliminary
Findings and Conclusions for Kyrgyzstan's Presidential
Election, the OSCE Election Observation Mission (EOM) in
the Kyrgyz Republic found that the July 23 presidential
election failed to meet key OSCE commitments for democratic

elections, including the commitment to maintain a clear separation between party and state. There were some positive elements, like distinct choice of presidential candidates and continuing engagement of civil society, but election day was marred by many problems and irregularities such as evidence of ballot box stuffing, inaccuracies in the voter lists, and some evidence of multiple voting. Counting and tabulation processes were also not up to standards for a fair and transparent election. (POL: Flitcraft)

Clear Divisions on Election Assessments

13. (SBU) In the July 30 Permanent Council meeting, the U.S., EU, Norway, and Canada raised strong concerns about the July 23rd presidential elections, citing extensively from the OSCE Election Observation Mission's (EOM) preliminary assessment. The EU took the strongest stand, urging the Kyrgyz to use the final EOM report as a basis for a "serious overhaul" of how elections in Kyrgyzstan are conducted. Russian Ambassador Azimov jumped to Kyrgyzstan's defense by applauding President Bakiev's "impressive" victory, that it met "CIS standards" for election, and praised the many improvements in the country's election system, despite "isolated cases of shortcomings." Azimov used the EOM report to highlight how, in Russia's view, ODIHR's election assessments are "excessively politicized"

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and to push for the CSTO's proposal to reform ODIHR's election monitoring. Kyrgyz Ambassador Imanalieva responded politely but firmly to our concerns, highlighting positive elements of the election. (POL: Kaufman)

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CiO Plans for Special Reps Office in Tbilisi

14. (C) At the July 28 CiO meeting, Ambassador Marinaki told us they intend to move ahead with plans for a small office in Tbilisi to support the work of Special Representative Christopoulos. The Georgians are reportedly "ecstatic" at the prospect, although the Greeks are still awaiting a formal MFA response. The Office will be headed by British secondee Steve Young, former head of the Military Monitoring Operation, and would support the Special Representative and help manage the Joint Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism. The Greeks said the Office would also liaise with the EUMM; they requested unspecified U.S. Embassy involvement as well. They stressed once again that they are aiming to open the Office by August 1, and hope it will only be a temporary arrangement until a normal OSCE field mission can be re-opened. At the same meeting, the CIO also reported that Ambassador Tagliavini will be delaying the publication of her report on the origins of the August 2008 conflict in South Ossetia until September because of pending interviews with key participants now scheduled in Vienna for mid-August. (POL: Flitcraft)

Russia Insists Agreement by South Ossetia, Abkhazia

15. (SBU) At the July 30 Permanent Council meeting, Russian Ambassador Azimov reiterated Russia's readiness to come to agreement on an OSCE field office in Tbilisi. He recalled previous Russian proposals within both the UN and OSCE, which were "less politicized and more practical" than the Greek Chairmanship's proposals, and took into account the new realities in the region. Azimov cautioned that any attempts to deploy a presence in the region, including by the Chairmanship, must be conducted with the full agreement of all parties to the Geneva discussions, to avoid

undermining those discussions. (POL: Raschka)

Georgia Tells Russia to "Stop Lying"

¶6. (SBU) Russia and Georgia traded accusations at the July 30 Permanent Council meeting over responsibility for the August 2008 conflict. Russian Ambassador Azimov condemned the "reckless military gamble" and "boorish aggression" perpetrated by the "Saakashvili regime" against innocent civilians and Russian peacekeepers in South Ossetia. Azimov also criticized the OSCE's inability to prevent the August conflict or speak out against the Georgian "aggressors", and called on the organization to help secure Georgian agreement to non-use of force agreements with South Ossetia and Abkhazia. In response to Russia's exhortation to explore the lessons learned from the conflict, Georgian Ambassador Gaprindashvili stated that one of the main lessons is that Russia is a destabilizing force in the entire Caucasus region, including the North Caucasus. He flatly called on the Russian representatives

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to "stop lying" and start behaving more responsibly. Other delegations, including the EU, Canada, Norway and the U.S., reiterated full support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity and called for a renewed OSCE presence throughout Georgia on the basis of the Greek Chairmanship's status-neutral proposals. (POL: Raschka)

EU Skeptical About Five-Sided Meeting on Security

¶7. (C) At our July 29 meeting with the EU, Swedish Ambassador Bard-BringQus shared our concerns about Russian ideas for a meeting, possibly following the Athens OSCE Ministerial of the five regional organizations dealing with European security (OSCE, NATO, CIS, CSTO, EU). The Russians, she pointed out, referenced the Istanbul agreement that established the ten-year old Platform for Cooperative Security (PCS), but it was a false analogy as the PCS set a number of ground rules that the CIS and CSTO can't meet and some of which the Russians no longer respect for NATO. Bard-BringQus also worried that a five-sided meeting would raise doubts about the centrality of the OSCE's Corfu Process in discussions about European security and possibly allow the Russians to play one off against the other. She concluded the discussion by stating that some countries were keen on keeping open dialogue about this issue only as a bargaining chip. (POL: Flitcraft/Hyde)

Head of Mission in Skopje Reports

¶8. (U) At the July 30 meeting of the Permanent Council, Jose Luis Herrero, Head of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission in Skopje, delivered his first report to participating States since assuming this position five months ago. He highlighted progress in the municipal and presidential elections held in March and April 2009 as compared to flawed elections in 2008 and said that the overall mood in Macedonia had improved as a result. He sounded notes of caution on inter-ethnic tensions still present in the country, saying they require continued attention. He does not envision any major changes to the mission's structure or staffing in 2010; beyond 2010, the status of EU integration processes would be the main factor to consider in looking for any needed adaptations. The Macedonian delegation's reply called Herrero's report balanced and perceptive, and while not explicitly rebutting any of the report's more critical aspects, focused on progress. (POL: Atkinson)

¶9. (SBU) On July 30 Valentin Inzko, HR/EUSR in Bosnia reported to the PC. He praised cooperation with the OSCE, including on joint initiatives in rule of law, good governance and long-term security. He was downbeat on developments in Bosnia, saying it was abundantly clear that institutional and political progress in the past two years had lagged, as measured by failure to achieve EU visa liberalization. He explained the rationale for recent use of Bonn powers, called on the international community to speak with one voice, and emphasized that OHR transition is conditional on progress on reforms and stability and not a

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goal in and of itself. The RF said focus should be on implementing the 5+2 for rapid transition, and called the recent use of the Bonn powers counterproductive. Bosnia's reply reaffirmed commitment to Euro-Atlantic integration, said constitutional reform would be an opportunity for elected officials to demonstrate leadership, and recognized the needed international role for coordinating and supporting elections. (POL: Atkinson)

Greeks Cool New Mediterranean Partners

¶10. (C) Also in the July 28 CiO meeting, the Greeks noted suggestions at last week's Helsinki Commission (HC) seminar in Washington to include Syria, Lebanon, and Libya as OSCE Mediterranean Partners. The CiO reported, however, that reaction by some participating States was lukewarm in part because the Partnership first needs to resolve the stalemated question of Palestine's inclusion. Ambassador Marinaki, noting these suggestions, along with the HC-inspired push to include Pakistan in the Asian Partnership, asked for an official USG position. She confirmed that the Mediterranean Partner Conference is now scheduled for December 14-15 in Egypt, which hopefully will be ratified in a PC decision as early as this week. She added that while the conference would touch upon all three dimensions, Human Dimension issues would be downplayed out of "respect for Egyptian sensitivities." (POL: Flitcraft)

Med Conference Location Still Undetermined

¶11. (C) Contrary to assurances given by Greek Ambassador Marinaki and the Kazakh Chair of the Med Partners Group earlier this week, Egypt failed to formally extend an offer to host the Med Conference in time for approval at the last Permanent Council before the August break. Although the draft agenda was tentatively agreed by delegations on July 21, the Egyptians were unable to make a decision to host the Conference, ostensibly because the Egyptian Foreign Minister has not had a chance to review the agenda due to his heavy travel schedule. The Greeks and Kazakhs are still hopeful that the Egyptians will extend an offer at some point during the August holidays, allowing the participating States to take a decision on the agenda, location and dates in early September. (POL: Raschka)

NEIGHBOUR